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WEEKLY VISITANT.

FOR NOVEMBER 8.

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIGHTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM—SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 15, 1806.

MISCELLANY.

ADDISON'S SPECTATOR.

From the Tenth Letter of the British Spy.

In one of my late rides into the surrounding country, I stopped at a little inn, to refresh myself and horse; and as the landlord was neither a Boniface nor "mine host of the garter," I called for a book, by way of killing time, while the preparations for my repast were going forward. He brought me a shattered fragment of the second volume of the Spectator, which he told me was the only book in the house, for "he never troubled his head about reading;" and by the way of conclusive proof, he farther informed me, that this fragment, the only book in the house, had been sleeping, unmolested, in the dust of his mantle-peice for ten or fifteen years. I could not meet my venerable countryman in a foreign land, and in this humiliating plight nor hear of the inhuman and gothic contempt with which he had been treated, without the liveliest emotion. So I read my host a lecture on the subject; to which he appeared to pay as little attention as he had before done to the Spectator, and with the *sang froid* of a Dutchman, answered me, in the cant of the country, that he "had other fish to fry," and left me.

It had been so long, since I had an opportunity of opening that agreeable collection, that the few numbers now left before me, appeared entirely new; and I cannot describe to you the avidity and delight with which I devoured those beautiful and interesting speculations. Is it not strange, my dear S*******, that such a work should have ever lost an inch of ground? A style so sweet and simple; and yet so ornamented! A temper so benevolent, so cheerful, so exhilirating! A body of knowledge, and of original thought, so immense and various! So strikingly just, so universally useful! What person of any sex, temper, calling, or pursuit, can possibly converse with the Spectator, without being conscious of immediate improvement? To the spleen, he is a perpetual and never failing antidote, as he is to ignorance and immorality.—No matter for the disposition of mind in which you take him up; you smile at the wit, laugh at the drollery, feel your mind enlightened, your

heart opened, softened and refined, and when you lay him down you are sure to be in better humour both with yourself and every body else. I have never mentioned the subject to a reader of the Spectator, who did not admit this to be the invariable process: and in such a world of misfortunes, of cares, and sorrows, and guilt, as this is, what a prize would this collection be, if it were rightly estimated! Were I the sovereign of a nation which spoke the English language and wished my subjects cheerful, virtuous and enlightened, I would furnish every poor family in my dominions (and see that the rich furnish themselves) with a copy of the Spectator; and ordain that the parents or children should read four or five numbers, aloud, every night in the year. For one of the peculiar perfections of the work is, that while it contains such a mass of ancient and modern learning, so much profound wisdom and of beautiful composition, yet there is scarcely a number throughout the eight volumes which is not level to the meanest capacity. Another perfection is, that the Spectator will never become tiresome to any one whose taste and whose heart remain uncorrupted.

I do not mean that this author should be read to the exclusion of others;—much less that he should stand in the way of the generous pursuit of science, or interrupt the discharge of social or private duties. All the councils of the work itself have a directly reverse tendency. It furnishes a store of the clearest argument and of the most amiable and captivating exhortations, "to raise the genius and to mend the heart." I regret, only, that such a book should be thrown by, and almost entirely forgotten, while the gilded blasphemies of infidels and "noon-tide traces" of pernicious theorists are hailed with rapture and echoed around the world. For such, I should be pleased to see the Spectator universally substituted; and, throwing out of the question its morality, its literary information, its sweetly contagious serenity, and the pure and chaste beauties of its style; and considering it merely as a curiosity, as concentering the brilliant sports of the finest cluster of geniuses that ever graced the earth, it surely deserves perpetual attention, respectand consecration.

There is, methinks, my S*******, a great fault in the world as it respects this subject; a giddy instability, a light and fluttering vanity, a prurient longing after novelty, an impatience, a disgust, a fastidious contempt of every thing that is old. You will not understand me as censuring the progress of sound science. I am not so infatuated an antiquarian, nor so poor a philanthopist as to seek to retard the expansion of the human mind. But I lament the eternal oblivion into which our old authors, those giants of literature, are permited to sink, while the world stands open-eyed and open-mouthed, to catch every modern, tinseled abortion, as it fall from the press. In the small circles of America for instance, perhaps there it no want of taste and even zeal for letters. I have seen several gentlemen who appear to have an accurate, a minute acquaintance with the whole range of literature in its present state of improvement; yet you will be surprised to hear that I have not met with more than one or two persons in this country who have ever read

the works of Bacon or of Boyle. They delight to saunter in the upper story, sustained and adorned as it is, with the delicate proportions, the foliage and flourishes of the Corinthian order; but they disdain to make an acquaintace or hold communication at all, with the Tuscan and Dorick plainness and strength, which base and support the whole edifice. As to lord Verulam, when he is considered as the father of experimental philosophy; as the champion whose vigour battered down the idolized chimeras of Aristotle, together with all the appendant and immeasurable webs of the brain woven, and hung upon them by the ingenious dreamers of the schools; as the hero who not only rescued and redeemed the world from all this darkness, jargon, perplexity and errour; but, from the stores of his own great mind, poured a flood of light upon the earth, straitened the devious paths of science, and planned the whole paradise, which we now find so full of fragrance, beauty, and grandeur—when he is considered, I say, in these points of view, I am astonished that literary gentleman do not court his acquaintance, if not through reverence, at least through curiosity. The person, who does so, will find every period filled with pure, solid, golden bullion; that bullion which several much admired posterior writers have merely moulded to various forms, or beaten into leaf and taught to spread its floating splendours to the sun.

This insatiable palate for novelty, which I have mentioned, has had a very striking effect on the style of modern productions. The plain language of easy conversation will no longer do. The writer who contends for fame or even truth, is obliged to consult the reigning taste of the day. Hence, too often, in opposition to his own judgment, he is led to incumber his ideas with his gorgeous load of ornaments; and when he would present to the public a body of pure, substantial and useful thought, he finds himself constrained to encrust and bury its utility within a dazzling case, to convert a feast of reason to a concert of sounds: a rich intellectual boon into a mere bouquet of variegated pinks and blushing roses. In his turn he contributes to establish and spread wide the perversion of the public taste: and thus, on a principle resembling that of action and re-action, the author and the public reciprocate the injury; just as, in the licentious reign of Charles II, the dramatist and his audience were to poison each others morals.

AGATHIAS AND MARIA.

AN AFFECTING INTERVIEW.

In a village, not far from the metropolis of the British empire, lived a gentleman of small fortune, who had a daughter named Maria; and the widow of a naval officer, who had a son named Agathias.

So near a neighbourhood naturally brought on an acquaintance; and as there was but one good school in the place, Agathias and Maria were educated together.

They were both remarkable, not only for their beauty, but understanding; and therefore it is not strange, that they became insensibly attached to each other by a reciprocal tenderness, of which they knew neither the power nor the name.

Agathias was about two years older than Maria ; and when he was about seventeen, it was thought proper that he should go to sea.

All things were therefore, prepared for his voyage ; and the ship, in which he was to sail, was commanded by his uncle. Agathias, when he went to take leave of Maria and her family, bid them adieu with great cheerfulness and good-humour, but reserved his last compliments for her. He tenderly embraced her, and seemed to have much to say, but at last quitted her without being able to utter a word, and with such emotions as were visible to all present.

This particular was soon known to her companions, who were continually teazing her about her sweetheart ; but she was more deeply interested in the subject of their mirth, than they imagined.

In a few weeks, there was a visible alteration in the appearance of poor Maria. She became pale, melancholy, and silent. Her health gradually declined, and her friends dreaded a consumption, but were not able to discover the cause.

After some months, she could not, without great difficulty, be induced to eat. She was consumed by a perpetual hectic. In a twelvemonth she was worn to a skeleton, and her melancholy increased into the most deplorable madness.

Her parents, with great reluctance, at last consented to put her into a private mad-house, where she continued three years, and was then pronounced incurable. As she could not be taken home, and, as the expence of keeping her abroad was very great, her parents were futher persuaded to remove her to Bedlam, not without some hopes of a cure from a different treatment. Here she continued five years longer, when a trifling accident first dicovered the cause of her disorder.

Some of her companions, who went to see her ,carried her a few sweatmeats in a paper, and this paper, was found the next day, by the woman who had the care of the ward, having these words pricked in it with a pin : "Poor Agathias ! Are you in your grave ? Or have you forgotten your unhappy Maria ?——But she will never forget you !"

This paper the woman gave to Maria's farther, who imediately conceived its full meaning, and, by ordering other peices of paper to be often dropped in her room, and afterwards taken away, he obtained many confimations of the purport of the first, and could no longer doubt, but that the love of Agathias had reduced his Maria to this state of extreme and hopeless misery.

Eight years had now passed, since Maria was first confined, and Agathias's mother and family had removed into a remote part of Yorkshire. Agathias had been abroad the greatest part of the time, and being now just returned, had passed his examination, and obtained a lieutenant's commission.

As love had not impressed the idea of Maria upon Agathias's memory so deeply as it had impressed the idea of Agathias upon Maria's, and as he had no connection with the village where she had lived, he did not at the age of twenty-five, think much of those with whom he had been acquainted at eighteen.

Chance, however, carried him to his old neighbourhood, and then the sight of the place, where he had enjoyed the cheerful innocence of childhood, renewed a thousand ideas that were associated with it, and he could not pass by the house, where Maria's parents still lived, without enquiring after the family.

He was received by the father and mother with great courtesy, as a stranger ; for time had so changed his person, that they did not know him.

When he discovered himself, the father instantly burst into tears at the recollection of his daughter's misfortune, and the mother sunk down in a swoon.

Agathias, who could not conceive the cause of the distress, which his presence had produced, stood still in great consternation, and feared to ask any question, lest he might increase it.

The father, after having a little recollected himself, attempted to account for his behaviour, but was not able. A third person, however, who happened to be present, and was well acquainted with the affair related it to Agathias, who listened till pity had revived his love, and, upon a silent comparison of the pleasure which he had once shared with her, and to the misery to which she was reduced by the same cause, the tears, almost without his knowledge. stole down his cheeks, and he stood some time silent ; ——then recollecting himself at once, and assuming his natural vivacity, he said to the father, "Come, Sir, I beg, that if any thing in my power can serve her, you would be comforted ;——to-morrow you shall give me leave to see her."

To this the old gentleman gladly consented ; and, the next day, Agathias hastened to the cell, where he found the once blooming, sprightly beauty, sitting alone, pale and dejected, supporting her feeble body with her hands placed upon her knees, and looking with a kind of fixed insensibility upon the ground.

Agathias, after he had recovered from the first shock of such a spectacle, went to her, and gently taking her hand, called her by her name. His voice awakened her remembrance in a moment. She instantly started from her seat. Her eyes sparkled with eagerness, and her cheeks glowed with blushes. She held him at a distance, and gazed at him with a piercing and fixed attention. Still she was silent ; but he still urging her to speak, and asking if she knew him, she at length fetched a deep sigh, and said, "Yes, I know you very well :——You are Agathias."

He was so moved at this incident, that he caught her in his arms, and wept over her, in an excess of fondness, uttering many tender and passionate exclamations of love and pity.

It had been remarked, that during the whole time of her confinement, the affliction of her mind had never once been relieved by tears. But now, they burst from her in a sudden and copious shower. Her look grew more expressive, and her reason seemed already to have returned.

When he went away, she asked him tenderly, if she should not see him again : And, upon his assuring her, that he would not only see her again, but would be always with her, she replied with a sigh, though with perfect composure, "Then I shall be well."

If Agathias had not been before enamoured of her beauty, he was now in love to distraction with her distress.

The next morning, he went again to the hospital, and was told that Maria had wept incessantly many hours after he had left her ;——that she was then more clam and composed, ate what was brought to her, while her guard staid with her,——and desired she might have some change of clothes, about which she had, till then, been totally indifferent.

When he entered her cell, and enquired how she had rested, her answer was ready and pertinent. He remained with her the whole day, and she still behaved with a reserve, and becoming decency, like one conscious of having been seen in a disorder, from which she was recovered.

In this manner he continued to visit her near two months, and being then convinced that no degree of her disorder remained, she was removed to a more commodious appartment :———Her health and beauty returned : ———Her parents and Agathias were overjoyed at the change,——and, soon after, they were married.

They contined to live at her father's house, and, in about ten months, she brought Agathias a son, which, perhaps, was the only thing that could increase their happiness.

CURIOSITY.

Curiosity is inherent in man ; and, in some measure, accompanies every degree of the human understanding, and every modification of the mind.—From the philosopher to the peasant, scarcely any one is found who is not desirous of information on one subject or another ; but this curiosity is directed to different objects, in different minds, in proportion to their degrees of elevation or the extent of their previous improvements. That great Colossus of literature and moral philosophy, Dr. Johnson, says, "Curiosity is one of the most permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect." And again, "Curiosity is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last ; and, perhaps, always predominates in proportion to the strength of the mental faculties." These are the encomiums which that great observer of the human mind bestows on this passion ; but with all deference to so respectable an authority, the praise is, perhaps, rather due to the direction it takes, than to the passion itself ; for curiosity may be directed to the most insignificant as well as the most important objects. The uncultivated peasant confines his enquiries to the affairs of his own parish, while the man of a more improved understanding, and more extensive views, directs his attention to the affairs of the world at large, and is desirous of information relative to subjects which interest mankind in general ; the schemes of pohticians, the stratagems of war, the fluctuations of commerce, and the' progress of arts, sciences or literature. This active curiosity of man may be gratified in many different ways ; but no gratification can ever satisfy it. The traveller, who goes to view a strange country, on ascending every eminence, amuses his mind in the expectation of the prospect he shall enjoy from the summit ; but on gaining his point, his curiosity is so far from being extinguished by gratification, that it operates with redoubled force, and excites his desires to contemplate the landscapes which lie beyond his view ; and which, he expects, will yet diversify the scene, and amuse him in his farther progress. In like manner, the man of a cultivated understanding, while he investigates the wonders of art, or the phenomena of nature, finds his curiosity continually excited by new objects ;—and the village gossip, who turns her thoughts to nothing farther than the domestic concerns of her neighbors, finds her curiosity as strongly and incessantly excited by the whispers of scandal, and the trifling concerns of the neighborhood, as does the philosopher who directs his attention to the most important and interesting phenomena of the physical, moral, or intellectual world.

Bigland.

SCRAP.

Nothing is more vain than for a woman to deny her age—she cannot deceive herself, who is the only person concerned about it. If a man dislikes a woman, because he thinks her of the age she is, he will only dislike her the more by being told she is younger than she seems to be, and, consequently, looks older than she ought to do. The anno domini of her face will weigh more than that of her register.

POETRY.

SONG.—THE LOVER.

From the Providence Phœnix.

Some few years ago,
My poor brother Joe,
Got in love with a damsel as fat as a plover,
And ever since then
Full certain I've been
That nature ne'er could,
In most frolicksome mood,
Make a comicler thing than a lover.

CHORUS.

What a whimsical dog is a lover—
Flames and darts,
Broken hearts,
Sudden starts;
Fearful eyes,
Sobs and sighs,
Grunts—groans,
Skin and bones;
O! what a queer dog is a lover.

To think of his vapors
And comical capers,
By my soul I have laugh'd full a hundred times over,
The devil a bit
Could we get him to eat,
He'd whimper and whine,
He'd mope and he'd pine,
And he'd look full as sad
As a dog running mad;
O! what a sad fellow's a lover.

CHORUS.

What an ill looking dog is a lover;
His eyes dull and red,
And sunk in his head,
His face thin and pale,
His pace like a snail;
O blood, fire and thunder,
What is there I wonder,
In the world that looks worse than a lover.

O ne'er was poor wight
In such terrible plight,
Doctor Squab swore by Galen he'd never recover;
He'd rip and he'd tear,
And he'd foam like a bear,
And he'd swear that in nature
There was not a creature
So charming as Tabitha Rover.

CHORUS.

O what a blind dog is a lover;
Girl plump and fat,
Or poor as rat—
Hale looking,
Pale looking,
Clear eyed,
Blear eyed,
'Long spliced,'
Strong spliced,
This—that,
No matter what;
Ah! such a blind dog is a lover.

Full well I remember
One night in December,
I wish'd that the devil had Tabitha Rover,
For while I was sleeping,
And Joe vigils keeping
He kick'd off the clothes
And the frost bit my toes;
Ne'er again will I sleep with a lover.

CHORUS.

O zounds, who would sleep with a lover,
With his mutt'ring & mumbling,
His tossing and tumbiing,
His bouncing and burning,
His flouncing and turning,
By the squirt of old Chiron!
What perils environ
The poor devil that sleeps with a lover.

But it's all over now,
For two years ago
Brother Joe pop'd the question to Tabitha Rover;
Sweet Tabby, said he,
Will you marry me?
Her bosom turned red,
She hung down her head
And sunk in the arms of her lover.

CHORUS.

What a changeable dog is a lover:
Sobbing—sighing,
Groaning—dieing,
Moping—pining,
Whimp'ring—whining,
Sheep's eyes—glances killing,
Pops the question—very willing;
Pretty Miss is—hugs, kisses,
Raptures—blisses:
Then the wedding,
Then the bedding,
Honey moon,
Over soon,
And then good bye to the lover.

On a beautiful Young Lady being sworn as a witness.

If such a witness KISS THE BOOK,
I heave a sigh and on her look;
And wish to Heav'n that BOOK I were,
Whereon such witness comes to swear.

TRANQUILLITY.

Tranquillity is the wish of all :—the good, while pursuing the track of virtue ; the great, while following the star of glory ; and the little while creeping in the styes of dissipation, sigh for tranquillity, and make it the great object which they ultimately hope to attain. How anxiously does the sailor, on the high and giddy mast, when rolling through tempestuous seas, cast his eyes over the foaming billows, and anticipate the calm security he hopes to enjoy when he reaches the wished-for shore ! Even kings grow weary of their splendid slavery, and nobles sicken under increasing dignities. All, in short, feel less delight in the actual enjoyment of worldly pursuits, however great and honorable they may be, than in the idea of their being able to relinquish them, and return to

——————"Some calm sequester'd spot,
"The world forgetting—by the world forgot."

ANECDOTE.

A mortal fever once prevailed on board a ship at sea ; and a negro fellow was appointed to throw overboard the bodies of those who died from time to time. One day, when the Capt. was on deck, he saw the negro dragging out of the forecastle, a sick man who was struggling violently to extricate himself from the negro's grasp, and remonstrating most bitterly against the cruelty of burying him *alive*. "What are you going to do with that man, you black d—l ?" said the Capt. " Going to *trow* him overboard, Massa, cause he dead," replied the negro. '*Dead* you scoundrel ?' says the Capt. 'don't you see that he *moves* and *speaks* ?' "Why yes Massa," (replied the negro) "I know he *say* he no dead ; but him always *lie* so like h—l, *nobody nebber know when to believe him.*

EPIGRAM.

As Walter and Patrick, one day were conversing,
And boasting of feats by their countrymen wrought ;
Of their strength and their stature were quaintly rehearsing,
And what pranks they had play'd, and yet never were caught ;
Says Walter, "the children of Anak, so brawny,
Were pigmies, compar'd to Scotch lads of the hill ;
And the far fam'd Goliath, was no more to Sawney,
Than Sandy's wee top to the whait of a mill."—
"Hold, hold, by Shaint Patrick," cries Pat in a passion ;
"In Ireland, much bigger as yours can be found ;
I've fraquently known many paple of fashion,
So tall, that their fait could na come nigh the ground." [*Balance.*

MARRIAGE.

In this town, Capt. John Stone, to Miss Catharine Dodge.

DEATHS.

In Danvers, Capt. Elias Smith, aged 76. At Beverly, Mr. William Pindar, aged 26, son of Mr. Simon P. of Danvers.
In this town, Mr. William Esty, aged 30. Mr. Thomas Henman, aged 40.

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